



2003 Governor's Award for Pollution Prevention and Sustainable Practices

Application Guidelines

(for use with the application brochure, Pub. # 03-04-09)

Applications due June 6, 2003

Governor's Award Program Website:
www.ecy.wa.gov/sustainability

Governor's Award Program Coordinator:
Mariann Cook Andrews
Department of Ecology, HWTR
P O Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600
Phone: (360) 407-6740
Fax: (360) 407-6715
E-mail: maco461@ecy.wa.gov

Pub. # 03-04-010
April 2003



If you require this document in alternative format, please call (360) 407-6700 (voice) or dial 711 or 1-800-833-6388 (TTY).

Application Guidelines

Governor's Award for Pollution Prevention and Sustainable Practices

These guidelines will help you present your pollution prevention and sustainable practice accomplishments effectively on your application. The suggestions are optional, but they may help you make your application more informative and compelling for the reviewers and judges.

General Information

What is the Governor's Award for Pollution Prevention and Sustainable Practices?

Each year the Governor of Washington presents the Governor's Award for Pollution Prevention and Sustainable Practices. This award recognizes Washington enterprises that have shown leadership in environmental protection while at the same time accomplishing their own objectives. It is this public recognition, as much as the plaque the winners receive, that comprises the actual award.

Why does the Governor give this Award?

The overriding goal of the award program is to move as many entities as possible further along the continuum towards sustainability. This means preventing pollution before it happens. It means getting beyond thinking of waste as something we have to accept in our world.

What do the winners receive?

Winners receive a plaque from the Governor in a special ceremony. The Department of Ecology publicizes the awards in the news media throughout the state and through a traveling exhibit displayed at Ecology offices and appropriate conferences during the year. Winners may submit up to 20 media contacts for additional publicity. Applicants who make the final round of judging receive a certificate of recognition.

Are there a set number of winners each year? Are there categories of winners?

There is no set number of winners each year. In past years there have been as few as six and as many as 12 winners. Judging and awarding is not done by categories. The application form does ask about the size of the enterprise and whether it is a commercial or not-for-profit, to help the judges when they are comparing the finalists.

How are the applications judged?

All applications are screened first for basic eligibility. Eligible applications are sent to Ecology staff members who work in the region of the state in which the applicant is based. These staff members will check for compliance with environmental regulations and general quality of performance. This may involve a visit to the applicant. Headquarters staff then conducts a final review.

The reviews narrow the field of applicants down to a short list of finalists. Finalist applications are sent to a panel of judges who will make the final selection. After reviewing the finalist applications separately, the judges meet in August and select the winners. Ecology then does one last screen of the selected winners before the award ceremony.

Who are the judges?

The judging panel includes previous winners, pollution prevention and sustainable practices experts from local and federal government agencies, labor, and environmental organizations. The judges are based in Washington state. They are not employees of Washington state or the Department of Ecology.

Eligibility

Can anyone apply for the Award?

Any business, organization, agency, or school in Washington is eligible to apply. Applicants must be in good standing with environmental regulations.

Do I have to be a Washington enterprise to be eligible?

Yes. A regional or national enterprise with an office in Washington is eligible, but the application must be limited to the work that impacts the Washington environment.

My enterprise has had environmental regulation violations in the past. Can we still apply?

An applicant who has had environmental compliance issues may still apply, but the issues must have been resolved to the satisfaction of the Department of Ecology. If you have satisfied the inspector or the government agency (local/state/federal) that brought the violation to your attention, that is a good first step. Your application should be upfront about this. It will not reflect well on your application if the problem comes out in the review process.

Criteria

What is the award based on?

The award is given to those applicants that best demonstrate:

- **Comprehensive and successful efforts** to prevent pollution and incorporate sustainable practices into their operations; and
- **Innovation, leadership and commitment** in pollution prevention and sustainable practices.

What does it take to win the Award?

There is strong competition for this award. Standout applications present clear, concise descriptions of the work done by the applicant **and** the tangible results achieved. (*See Data and Measurements.*)

Have you have found ways to offer your product or service while reducing or eliminating the use of toxic materials, preventing waste, reducing emissions to the air and discharges to water, and conserving natural resources? Have you demonstrated excellence through your commitment to environmental quality and leadership through your willingness to share your knowledge with the broader community? Have you “squeezed the last drop” of environmental benefit from the entire range of your operations? If you can answer yes to these questions, you’re on your way.

What is “pollution prevention”?

Pollution prevention is reducing or eliminating waste as close as possible to the source. Pollution prevention strives to use raw materials, water, energy and other resources more efficiently, and to reduce the use and emission of toxic substances. The best form of pollution prevention is not creating the waste in the first place (sometimes called “beginning of the pipe”), rather than trying to figure out what to do with it after it occurs (also known as “end of the pipe”).

Examples:

Reduce the use of toxics – beginning of pipe

The Wenatchee World, 2002 winner: Switched to digital cameras. Eliminated use of photographic film and developing chemicals.

Madison Carnolia Cleaners, 2002 winner: Changed cleaning process, equipment, and maintenance schedule. Reduced perchloroethylene use from 1,300 gallons per year to less than 95 gallons per year.

Reduce the release of toxics – end of pipe

Madison Carnolia Cleaners, 2002 winner: Separator water treated to non-hazardous levels of perc (.7ppm). Equipment includes alarm to alert in case of solvent passing through filters.

What are “sustainable practices”?

Sustainable practices are those that eliminate the use of substances that persist in the environment and that reduce or eliminate the negative impacts of a product or process. This covers the entire life cycle of the product or process all the way from the creation of the supplies necessary to produce the product or carry out the process through to the use or final disposal. Sustainability, an even broader goal, promotes choices that do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It focuses attention on the interdependence of the environment, the economy, and the community.

Sustainable practices

Batdorf and Bronson Coffee Roasters, 2002 winner: Installed solar panel to produce some power for office. Investing in “green power” program to offset power derived from fossil fuels and to create new opportunities for solar, wind and other alternative power sources.

Watson Furniture Group, 2002 winner: Switched from using virgin materials to recycled/reclaimed materials in building furniture. Located vendor who would use durable shipping blankets to package product rather than cardboard packaging.

I’m a consultant. I help other companies do a better job of protecting the environment while doing their work. Does this qualify?

The Governor’s Award is given for environmental results in Washington state. You will need to show the measurable results **in this state** of your work with your clients, what they have done under your direction to prevent pollution and move toward sustainability. Be sure to include what your enterprise has done in its own business operations.

Application Process

Will you accept late applications?

No. Applications must be received or postmarked by June 6, 2003. Late applications will be immediately returned.

Do I have to complete my own application?

No. You probably know your operations best, but if you think someone else can craft a better description of your work and results, then have them complete the application. Please be sure to show the contact information for the person who filled out the application, in case the reviewers have any questions for them.

Ecology employees may not complete the application for you.

The application should be “up to 2 ½ single-sided pages.” How many words is that?

Approximately 2,500 words. You can include up to 10 pages of attachments, too. These can be charts and tables of data, news or other short articles; photographs (preferably no larger than 8½” x 11”); brochures; certifications (especially for environmental management systems [EMS] such as ISO 14000/1); etc.

I need to send my attachments separately from the application. How do I make sure you know they are coming? What if they come late?

There is a space on the application form to indicate that you are sending attachments separately from the application. If the application is received on time and you notify us that the attachments are coming, they will be accepted. But the review process will not be delayed to wait for late attachments. It is your responsibility to make sure that all items arrive on time.

How far back should we go in citing our pollution prevention and sustainable practices efforts?

We suggest three years. But go further if there is compelling relevance in mentioning previous history of your work. (If you’ve won the award before, you should clearly identify the work that’s been done since then.)

What will make my application stronger?

Here are some tips, and some ideas on what to avoid.

Pollution Prevention, Sustainable Practices & Sustainability

This award focuses on preventing pollution and the even-higher goals of sustainable practices and sustainability. Pollution prevention reduces or eliminates waste at the source or beginning of a process. (So, for example, taking a hazardous substance out of your production line altogether is even better than relying on recycling that substance.)

Sustainable practices eliminate the use of substances that persist in the environment (such as mercury and lead) and address the negative environmental impacts of a product or process from the supply chain on through the end use or disposal of a product (such as redesigning a product so it doesn't contain toxic substances and can be more easily recycled or reclaimed).

Sustainability, an even broader goal, promotes choices that do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It encompasses the environment, the economy, and the community. (For example, salvaging and reusing building materials can preserve resources while providing jobs and lower-cost housing.)

Data and Measurements

Quantify your accomplishments as much as possible. Stating that you eliminated a toxic substance from your process or reduced air pollution emission is good, but it would be more compelling if you quantify the impact of your activities. Suppose you reduced carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. Just stating that may not be sufficient for the judges to appropriately evaluate your effort. It is far more informative to state that you "reduced 1,500 lbs. of CO₂ emissions each month since March 2002" or to provide a trend graph to show varying amounts of reductions.

When citing quantities (pollution, waste, discharge, emissions, etc.) reduced, please show the time period covered. For example, "50,000 gallons of non-recyclable used oil reduced over the last two-year period, from 1/2000 through 12/2001" is more informative than "50,000 gallons of non-recyclable used oil reduced."

Reporting measurements

Batdorf and Bronson Coffee Roasters, 2002 winner: Offset 258 tons of CO₂ and other emissions through purchase of 258 "Green Tag" units of investment in wind power.

Columbia River Carbonates, 2002 winner: "Prior to conversion to a new water treatment system ...CRC treated and discharged more than 14 million gallons of process water to the Columbia River each year...CRC is currently operating at zero discharge...by recycling 100% of its process waste water for production and plant wash-down water...Improvements in our process coupled with the new water treatment system have reduced the volume of solid waste/byproduct by 50-60%. In the past we excavated and shipped 10-12,000 tons of material from our settling lagoons each year, today we generate only 4-5,000 tons on an annual basis."

Comprehensiveness

Tell us about **every** effort your organization is making in pollution prevention and sustainable practices. You may be most proud of your new process that eliminated the use and discharge of mercury in the last five years, but remember to describe all the other things you may also be doing. Did you save energy, recycle materials, reduce the number of employees commuting in single-occupancy vehicles, reuse water, change to less toxic janitorial products, institute environmentally preferred purchasing, train your employees in environmental stewardship or provide community or customer environmental outreach? All of these are appropriate for your application.

Recycling

If your organization recycles, please clarify where the materials go if you can. For instance, if construction debris was involved, was it sent back into reuse by your own or another company? If you sent it to a vendor, what happened to it? If you recycled used motor oil, what did you do with it? Do you make a point to purchase products with recycled content? Do you use reclaimed materials in your production processes? This is also a chance to describe what you are doing regarding product stewardship and considering the life cycle of products. Do you engage in a take-back program for your products when the consumer is done with them? Have you designed your product so the consumer can recharge or revitalize it?

Intention vs. Accomplishment

It is most compelling if you can report results. You can mention any efforts your enterprise has just put into place or *intends* to implement, but remember – the award is given for **results**, not good intentions.

Leadership

For this award, we define leadership as the extra effort you make to increase the reach of environmental stewardship, especially with your own staff and in your field of enterprise. Do you provide environmental education and outreach to your staff and management? Do you lead your community by example? Do you work within your industry or sector to advance the level of environmental stewardship, pollution prevention and sustainable practices? Do you work with local schools? Neighbors? Community groups? Setting an example, explaining what you do and why you do it, are all great leadership efforts to highlight.

Leadership

The Wenatchee World, 2002 winner: Received the “Best of Show” for color reproduction among all-sized newspapers in the U.S., demonstrating that quality can be achieved while reducing waste and use of toxic inks in the manufacturing process. Started the “World Recycling Award” to reward its employees for good recycling habits.

Madison Carnolia Cleaners, 2002 winner: Opened facility for agency and industry training inspections, offered examples of its maintenance log and spill prevention plan to peers, routinely promotes their own environmental ethic in the facility’s lobby and through newspaper ads.

Format of the application

We prefer electronic applications. You can submit electronically by going to the Department of Ecology’s Sustainability Web site (www.ecy.wa.gov/sustainability) and entering your information into the web-based form. Or you can download the form (it’s in Microsoft Word), fill it out, and e-mail it back to the award office. If you submit online, keep in mind that you can compose your responses elsewhere on your computer, then copy-and-paste it into the web form. For either format of electronic submission, you can submit your attachments electronically or by regular postal mail.

If you submit a hard copy application, please print on both sides of the paper and use recycled-content paper if possible. Send **three**, stapled copies. We have to make copies for our reviewers and judges so do not bind the applications or otherwise make it difficult to separate the pages.

Common mistakes to avoid

Focusing the application on just one or two efforts

The judges are looking for companies and agencies that are, as one judge put it, “squeezing the last drop of environmental benefit” out of their operations. Not just switching from a toxic to a non-toxic substance in the production process, but going after as many hazardous substances as possible, up to and including what is used to clean the bathroom sink.

Focusing the application on “after the fact” efforts.

Recycling and cleaning up pollution are “after the fact.” The pollution and waste materials have already been created. But true pollution prevention and sustainable practices occur at “the beginning of the pipe.” Not just recycling, but changing products and practices to keep from producing the “stuff” that has to be recycled. Not just finding a better way to clean up pollution, but finding a way that doesn’t create the pollution in the first place.

Providing rhetoric but no measurements or details.

If your company has done the hard work to make real pollution prevention progress, someone somewhere should have measurement data

Only telling part of the story.

If you’re recycling, where is the material going? If you’ve changed a process, what did you have to do to make that change? “Close the loop” on your explanation by following up with these type of details.

Overloading the judges with too much information.

It is important to tell the whole story, but it is also important to do it as succinctly as possible. Use cross references on the application to keep from repeating things.

Making it hard for us to contact you.

Make sure the contact name, address, mailing address, e-mail, fax number etc. are correct. If you receive mail at one address and the facility is at a different address, make sure they are labeled as such. If any address or number changes after you submit the application, notify the Coordinator.



Printed on recycled paper